

Eckhart Tolle Stillness is the heart of happiness

[Speaker 1] (0:02 - 1:21:22)

Welcome, some of you have only just arrived here, perhaps from the busy city and a busy life. And perhaps we can just make sure, you can make sure that you are completely here, present, attentive not only to the words, which are not all that important, but also to the stillness in the room. Attentive to the stillness in the room means just to notice that there is stillness here, apart from the words.

If all you're interested in here is the words, then this evening would work for you only on a conceptual level. And you have so much of that already in this civilization, information, facts, to the thinking mind, stillness is uninteresting, but you love it. And you may have to be able to just step out of the thinking mind for a moment in order to realize that you love the stillness.

And that that stillness is more than this word implies. Every word that we use to describe that, which is beyond words, reduces the reality of that. And yet we have to use words, but we don't have to be confined to using words.

And that's why it's so important, as you sit here, to be aware at the same time as you listen to the words, that there's also always the field of silence here in the room. Yes. Is that true?

Is there silence? Yes. You have to check for yourself.

Don't believe me that there's silence in the mind. Yeah, okay, there's silence. So what's next, says the thinking mind.

Because the interesting thing is, you cannot even notice that there is silence when you're immersed in a stream of thinking. Or to put it in a more extreme but true way, thought cannot even be aware of silence. Cannot notice it, because thought is inner noise.

And through inner noise, you cannot notice silence. And so, as most people are identified with a continuous stream of inner noise, they are never aware that in them, there's a deeper dimension within, underneath the continuous flux of thinking and the emotions that go with it, that in each human being, there's a much deeper dimension of consciousness. And we could use different pointers to say what it is.

One pointer is to say it is the realm of stillness, not dead, vibrantly alive stillness. And since this is a conference about the heart of happiness, that is the heart of happiness that every human carries inside. And it is also peace, inner peace.

It is only out of that dimension that external peace can finally emerge in the world, only

if a sufficiently large number of humans get in touch with that dimension within them. If that does not happen on the planet soon, it's a good sign, the fact that we are sitting here, that it is happening. If it does not happen soon on a larger scale, I know it is happening.

It's just a question of whether it's happening fast enough to stop the madness, self-destructive madness that the collective human mind to a large extent has become. So we are not self-indulgent here. It's not a selfish endeavor.

It is vital, not only on a personal level for yourself to become free of unhappiness, and it's only in the deeper dimension of yourself that you can become free of unhappiness. It's also vital for the planet, for humanity. Silence is still there in the room.

What happens when you notice it? It's very subtle. There's a moment in which stillness arises in you.

It is alert, an alert, aware presence. Let's try it out. Check for yourself if the silence is still there.

Yes, for that moment, you are not thinking. It may only have been a second or two. It may have been longer.

The moment you checked for yourself whether the silence in the room was still there, something arose in you that was consciousness, freed from thought. And that's the dimension that a few humans have access to who are very creative, only in their little field of creativity, not usually yet in the rest of their lives. That is the reason also that anybody who achieves mastery in any field has access to, usually only within the realm of that little field in which they have mastery.

The moment they stop throwing the ball or whatever they have chief mastery in, they go back usually into the same relative madness of normal human consciousness or unconsciousness. So allowing that which is already in you to emerge, that dimension, because it is already in everyone. And if you can be conscious throughout this evening of both dimensions as you listen, then you're listening in a state of stillness.

You hear the words, but there is that in you that receives the words, understands the word without needing to analyze or memorize or compare to something else that you already know, simply let them be there. So that in you is deeper than the person, the personal personalized sense of self, me, me and my story. It is deeper than your life circumstances that you have to think about.

You have to remember them to remember that you have many problems. When you do not remember and so revive them through thought, if you do not remember that you have many problems, and perhaps you might've thought you were the only one here in this room, you may be surprised that I don't believe there's anybody here who does not

have to some extent, a problematic life situation. That is normal.

Now, most people's attention, consciousness, conscious attention is continuously absorbed by their problematic life situation. That's what they, that occupies them. The moment they wake up, open your eyes in the morning.

For a moment, there is a clear space of stillness. You see the sky, you hear a bird. It feels good to be alive.

You may even feel the energy field in your inner body, the aliveness that is inside the body, the indwelling energy field. And this lasts maybe a minute. Then the memory comes, ah, my problems.

And then you remember what's going to happen today. And a heaviness descends upon you. It's like a cloud, a clear sky, and within one minute, enormous clouds come rolling in.

And then for the rest of the day, that is what absorbs your attention. Your face then loses that ease, that lightness, and is usually then tense, and the eyes become a little bit lifeless because you're only peripherally aware of your surroundings any longer because all your attention is in what you have to think about. What's the next thing I have to do?

Okay, oh, there's so much. Put so much on my mind today. Next, next.

So when you look at people, that's how they go through life. What are they looking for? The next thing to tackle, the next thing that's going to come.

They're not aware of what is here now. They're projecting to the next thing, and they are either hoping that the next thing will make their life a little bit better or fearing that the next thing will make their life a little bit or much worse because the future is uncertain. It gives you hope, and it gives you fear.

And between these two, normal human existence fluctuates, is torn. So you lose that. You lose something that for a moment you had.

No, did you lose it, or did it just get covered up? You cannot lose it. That's the good news.

Even if you've been immersed in mental turmoil for the past 30 years, you haven't lost it because it is indestructible. It is as indestructible as the silence in this room. That is one analogy we could use.

And it is as indestructible, to use another analogy, as the space in this room. No matter what we do here, we can make the most awful amount of noise. In the end, we will have to stop, and the silence will be back as if nothing had ever happened.

We can create the most incredible amount of chaos in this room, scream and shout and so on. Eventually, it will come to an end, and it will not have affected the space at all. It may have left, yes, it may have left an energy field of heaviness, but that also will dissipate.

That cannot affect the space. So there is something in you, one could say, that is the equivalent of, to use analogies in the external world, that is the equivalent of silence, or one could say the equivalent of space, a dimension of consciousness in you, in each human being. If you don't find that, if you're unaware of that, then it is as if it didn't exist for you.

It then is as if you were a beggar, sitting by the side of the road, here in, here out, getting a few cents from passersby, not knowing, I gave that analogy at the beginning of the Power of Now, that you've been sitting on a box filled with gold, because you never looked, or you can change a more modern analogy, not knowing that you have a secret bank account in Switzerland with \$100 million in it. You don't know it, and you don't know the number, and if somebody tells you, you say, I don't believe you. There is something in you that is very different, and yet not ultimately separate from, ordinary, everyday consciousness.

Now, ordinary, everyday human consciousness is becoming more and more dysfunctional. If you want to find out if that is true, read a book on modern history. I always recommend the 20th century, if you want to learn about the dysfunction of the human mind, and if you read it as if you had never seen it before, you say, how is this possible?

How can they create hell on this planet that is potentially, and to some extent, still is a paradise, a jewel floating in space? How is it that humans can have killed 100 million other humans within 100 years? 100, more than 100 million, 10 million alone in the First World War, that was only the beginning.

And that's the dysfunction on the collective level. You can go back in history, it's the same dysfunction, but you don't see it as clearly, and perhaps it's getting worse. There are certain indications that it is getting worse.

It is certainly becoming magnified through science and technology, which intrinsically is neither good nor bad, but more often than not, science and technology are used in the service of the human dysfunction. It requires great intelligence to build, to split the atom, and great stupidity and insanity to build stockpiles and stockpiles of nuclear weapons. It requires great intelligence to figure out how to build chemical and biological weapons, and great stupidity to make them, and so on.

You have always the dual nature of the human mind, intelligent, and at the same time, incredibly stupid. And that's the collective level. And then in people's personal lives, you

see so much dysfunction in the form of conflict, unhappiness, in many cases, deep unhappiness, which, underneath the surface very often in the Western world, there is a relatively polished surface to life.

People have learned to smile, but there's no inner smile. All the sick, the dying, the mad, the old people, most of them are shut away. Let's not look at that aspect of human existence.

Are we stepping out of that dysfunction now? Is a shift in consciousness possible for humanity? Yes, that's what the great teachers have always said.

That's what they pointed to. Jesus, the Buddha, the Hindu teachings, the teachings of liberation, the teachings of enlightenment, the teachings of salvation, of awakening. Thousands of years ago, the great ones already saw the dysfunction, when it wasn't even as clear yet as it is now, as obvious as staring you in the face every night you switch on the TV.

And yet they saw it already. And they saw also that there is a way beyond, a shift is possible, but they were misunderstood. Most humans were not ready yet for that.

They were misinterpreted. But they all point to the same thing. Buddha calls it freedom from suffering.

Jesus calls it salvation or the kingdom of heaven that is within, not over there, not in some other time, some other place, but here and now. Hindu teachings call it liberation, enlightenment. Yes, they were the early pioneers, the precursors.

It did not happen on a large scale because it wasn't necessary yet for it to happen on a large scale. The planet could survive very well even with the human dysfunction. But now things have changed.

A shift in consciousness has become a necessity. That's why we are here. It goes far beyond the personal and yet it also affects you on a personal level.

It frees you from the dysfunction of the human mind. Contacting that dimension within yourself. That's why we are here.

On the level of the dysfunction, yes, you can temporarily rearrange things in your life, but no ultimate transformation is there to be found. The wonderful news is that dimension in you has never gone away. And it is now emerging, pushing forward from within many, many human beings.

It wants to emerge. And that is already happening to many of you. So what does that mean?

There is something in you that is the equivalent of space. If you look out at night into the

sky, I don't know if it's clear tonight. I think it is.

You will see, once your eyes get used to the darkness, thousands of suns, the stars, most of which are suns. You can see the, you look into the vastness of space, which is awe-inspiring. The infinite space that is there of which you only see a tiny, tiny fraction.

Infinite vastness. Billions of suns, not only that, billions of worlds of galaxies, each galaxy containing billions of suns. Unimaginable vastness.

And if you look there, if you want to find out about the nature of the world and become like a little child without a lot of complicated conceptualization, then you look and you see, well, there are two things that I can see. I can see things and I can see space. There are two dimensions, things and things in space, space in which these things exist.

So the world consists of things and space. Now, what is that inside you? Things inside you is whatever thoughts occur inside you.

The stream of thinking is objects that arise in your consciousness. Emotions are also energy fields that arise temporary for energetic formations that arise in your inner space. Other things that arise, sense perceptions, light, hearing, gets translated into images.

So there are objects that occupy your consciousness, objects, and most people, most people's lives are confined to that, the objects in their field of consciousness. All the thoughts that go through their head day in, day out, that's what they identified with. That's me.

Their sense of self is in every thought. Hmm, oh, so worried about what's going to happen. I really don't know.

I mean, what if he does that? But on the other hand, that shouldn't have happened. Some writers are good.

They write that in some modern literature. You have the stream of thinking on paper and you can see how mad it is. And pointless.

Thinking can be very beautiful when it's actually applied to a useful purpose, powerful, wonderful. But 90% or more of one's thought processes are repetitive, old records. Not even CDs, they're older.

Old, scratchy records that have been playing in many cases from generation to generation the same patterns I inherited from parents to their children. There are people here who are immersed in the same kinds of thoughts, maybe in a different language from their ancestors, but the same thoughts and behavior patterns that are created by those thoughts that their ancestors had 200 years ago in France, in Italy, in England,

wherever, in Africa, wherever they lived. So we are stuck with that conditioned mind one thing after another comes up.

And now when we say identified, people are, they have their sense of self lodged in the stream of thinking and the emotions that go with the thinking. Oh, anger flows, they're totally in it or the sadness or so dreadful. Oh, my life, what's it all come to?

They tell themselves stories in the head and the story in the head becomes the identity. The story is partly involuntary because you've been given that by your surroundings, your parents, your upbringing, they told you stories about who you are. So partly you believe that and you add your own part of the story to that.

And so after a while you live with an identity that is the story of me. And that's what you think about, that is your life situation. And it is problematic.

That identity, that sense of self is always a problematic one. It's in its very nature to be problematic. It is also in its very nature to feel insecure and insubstantial.

It is also in its nature almost always to feel not enough. If you look deeply, what that means is, and most human beings have that, what that means is I am not enough yet. I haven't quite arrived at the completion of my sense of self.

And so the worst thing that could happen to you is for somebody to tell you that you do not have a future anymore. For example, a doctor, that happens. And that is dreadful for the identity that is derived from mind structures.

The mind made story-based sense of self because almost every story-based sense of self feels I need more time to be fully and completely myself. And they believe that if I can add certain things to my sense of self, then eventually I will reach a point where I feel I will feel complete, fully me, fully myself. So with that comes the incredible psychological need for more in people's lives.

Now, I'm not saying that it is not a wonderful thing to acquire a new object that is beautiful and that you can look at and handle or use. Yes, beautiful. That it is not a wonderful thing to explore life, to take some trips, to explore other countries, to have experiences, to meet people, to have relationships.

They're all wonderful things. It is part of living in this world of form, phenomenal reality. And so you're meant to explore and to play with the world of form, to exploit.

But that's not how most humans live. They don't play with it. They don't have a playful curiosity about the world of form.

They have an obsession with the world of form, an extreme attachment to the world of form because they are seeking themselves in the world of form. They are looking for

more of me. So where it's a nice thing, if you buy a nice car, why not?

But maybe are you looking for yourself in that? Are you seeking to add the mind object car, not just car, my car, to the accumulation of mind objects that's already there in you to add to, which for a while, not for very long, makes yourself, seems to complete your identity. I have added a big car, a big mind object to the accumulation of objects that I have already.

That's me, my knowledge, my status in society, what people have told me, am I important or not important? Sometimes I think I'm important and sometimes I'm not, not quite sure. My reputation, maybe I have something on my wall, diplomas, maybe I don't.

Maybe I have other mind objects that don't look very good, but I'm hanging on to them anyway. I've been a victim of certain people or groups of people or one person who did that to me, and that can become a mind object that occupies an important part of your sense of self in the absence of something better that works very well too. Me, the victim, oh yes, it's all what the people have done to me, it's dreadful.

And I'm not saying that they didn't do things to you, but is that good to be used to give you a sense of self? What kind of a sense of self is that? It is an object in consciousness that you have put there and that you revive every day by thinking about it.

And whoever is ready to listen to it, you tell them about it, either about how bad things are for you, which are also thoughts. And some people have that as their sense of identity mainly and others will tell others at parties how great things are, what they've just bought, the important things they've just done, me. What do you do for a living?

Well, and then the story comes. A story-based identity, this is the realm of object consciousness. This is the realm of thought.

And this is what gives people their sense of self. And it is not substantial. There's always the feeling I am not complete and there's a looking out then for more.

Now in this civilization, the Western world, one dimension where that operates very strongly is the obsessive accumulation of objects, external objects to identify with, because I think it's an unconscious compulsion to acquire more things because there's some feeling of not enough yet. Okay, let's go to the shopping mall. Ah, ah, that, and I'll have two of those and three of that.

And then you come home with the bags and then you take it out. And for a while you can add that to the, oh, that's my new dress, my new shoes, my new suit, my new whatever it is. And then you hang it.

Sometimes you don't even wear it. And then that's, it's a temporary satisfaction. And then, okay, what else can I fill myself up with?

How else can I complete my always deficient sense of self? Okay, let's see. I need to meet somebody interesting.

You go out looking for, or now I need to master something. There's nothing wrong with that. I need to learn something so that I feel important and I can show them that I'm good at something.

You master something and then you can, you're better than others at it after a while. You can compare yourself to others. I'm better than, or I know more than.

Knowledge can add that, big mind objects. Or they have an image in their mind of their external appearance, which becomes a big mind object. If it happens to be good, then people will use that readily and have an image of me as better looking than most.

And so you can carry that around or in the realm of a mind made sense of self, my appearance. And now if you're not good looking, then you have to look for something else. Knowledge, that was for a few years the case with me.

I wasn't good looking, but for a few years I was reading books and studying and absorbing information. And after a while that I felt knowledgeable. And then in the academic world, you show off then with your, you see how much you know, but there's always a sense of unease because invariably you run into somebody who knows more than you.

So you walk into a room and there's unease and then you make a casual remark to show how profound your knowledge is. And then somebody else says, you're completely wrong. This theory was proven to be a fallacy three years ago.

Now, what happens when somebody does that to you and you had identified with a mind object, you said it, but it was in the service, your sense of identity was in there. It was invested with a sense of self and somebody now denies that this is untrue. Three years ago, they proved without any doubt, somebody is removing something from your sense of self.

That's why people have such enormous reactions when they are trying to be right. And how dreadful it is, how it feels like dying when somebody shows you that you are wrong, the enormous emotional violence that comes with that. And even academics sometimes start, even physical violence I have experienced there.

Why? In the service of being right. Why do they need to be right?

Because their sense of self is invested in a mental position. They don't know who they are beyond that. That's, on a collective level, people fight wars about being right.

Our religion, we are right, you are wrong. Identifying with mental positions as us, our

position. We need you to be wrong because if you were not there being wrong, we would no longer know who we are.

We only define our identity through that which opposes the other. We need the other. This is built into the mind-made sense of self, the need for enemies, the need for conflict, because otherwise, the mind-made sense of self will become fluid without its boundaries.

It would lose its boundaries that it needs around the me. Now, the me can either be a predominantly personal sense of self, or it can be, as it is in some cultures, and for some people, a predominantly collective sense of self. Now, the personal sense of self of me is already mad and dysfunctional, but even more mad and dysfunctional is the collective sense of us.

That has created so much havoc and suffering on the planet. Us against them. And so they are fighting in the service of an identity.

And they need their enemies. They need the other. How does it work on a personal level?

On a personal level, when you don't know yourself beyond mind, you need to be in conflict with something or someone to uphold your sense of self. You need your problems. You need your enemies.

Whether the enemy is a person or a situation. Prolonged peace would be threatening to that sense of self. And this is, collectively, you can see it while they talk about peace, but there is no peace.

They talk about the peace process, the road to peace, the roadmap to peace. Where are they not going? There's no peace.

They're just words about peace because they are not ready yet for peace. They don't want the... So humans live in conflict in their own lives.

The egoic sense of self needs enemies. Situations, people, and so on, to be in conflict with. And all that is unconscious.

What is the greatest enemy of the egoic sense of self? The arch enemy of the egoic sense of self? The present moment.

That's why, for most people... Now, this is... That's why, for most people, the present moment is felt to be an obstacle to overcome.

They live as if the present moment were an obstacle almost continuously that they need to overcome. Now, since the present moment is all there ever is, since there is nothing ever that is not the present moment, never has been, and never will be, you can see how dysfunctional it is when you make life, which is inseparable from the present moment,

into your enemy. And so there is a continuously denial of now.

If people live, we can see in people's faces how they deny the now because they're looking to the next now, not this one, the only one there is. The next one is a mind object no more because the future only exists as a mental formation. Nobody's ever met it.

Nobody's ever experienced the future. It is a thought form. Past and future are thought forms.

Yes, in this realm, they seem to exist. They seem to be very real. They even seem to consume your body.

If you get older and older, eventually your body shrinks like an apple that's a few weeks old. And then finally it goes. Yes, and yet there's a strange paradox.

Life is always this moment. Your entire life unfolds in that space of now, that space of now. Now here we have the portal into the transformed consciousness, the space of now.

What most people believe is that their lives consist of thousands and thousands of moments, even every day, so many different moments, another moment and another moment because they believe that the form that this moment takes is the present moment. But it isn't. It's only the form that appears in the space of now.

It's always now. It's always the same now. No matter what form comes, the space of now is always the same.

It's always this moment. No matter what happens to you, one thing is certain. No matter what will ever happen to you, one thing is certain.

It will happen in the now. Now this sounds almost weird to the mind. Yeah, well, of course.

The mind doesn't know what to do with it. It almost stops the mind. Ah, so that must be true then.

It must be good. There's only this moment ever. All that people are aware of is the form that this moment takes.

They are not aware of the space of this moment. All they are aware of is the forms in their consciousness. They are not aware of the space that enables all the mental forms to be there.

And what they do is their egoic identity, the story-based sense of self says, this moment is not enough, not good enough. It's not fulfilling me. I need more.

Because of the need and the search for more, there's a desperate focus on future. Future

is okay for making little practical plans, but there's a desperate psychonautical need for future because the sense of identity believes that only the future will give you the more that you need to be fully yourself. And people who have acquired more and more realize at some point that they still don't feel fulfilled.

No matter how many mental objects they accumulate, external objects that become mental objects, no matter how much they accumulate, always there's this feeling, not enough yet. And so you find many wealthy people desperately searching for more experiences that they want to buy. Let's try this new drug, or more and more relationships, or more and more journeys, travel here and there, try this, nothing is ultimately fulfilling, only a little bit of, and then finally they may realize it's not to be found on that level.

It's not to be found on that. I cannot find myself there. I cannot find myself through adding more to who I think I am.

I can play with form, it's beautiful, explore this, learn a new language, but if I'm using it to find myself, it will never satisfy me, it won't do the job. And what people are desperately longing for is to have a deep feeling of rootedness, of identity, of being truly who you are, of being a sense of deep, deep safety, security, and aliveness. That's what they ultimately want, to feel your being as a continuous state.

And nothing in the world of objects, thought objects, can do that for you. Nothing, no matter how much more you add, can do that for you. In other words, no future, no matter how much more future you have, can do that for you to help you find who you truly are.

The only access point to that is now, because you already are fully yourself on the deepest level. Only on the level of form could you add more. It does not complete who you are.

And people learn that lesson sometimes who have accumulated much on the level of form and lose everything. They suddenly lose every one of the accumulated forms, relationships, possessions, status, jobs, reputation, money, all forms that I identified with as me, there's a moment of dreadful fear and panic, and then it has sometimes happened to some of them that suddenly there was enormous peace and clarity. For the first time in their life, they experienced the sense of inner space.

And they experienced it because the accumulation of objects in their mind crumbled. That is the grace that is hiding behind death and any kind of deep loss. Because there's always a potential when some objects leave you, that that which you are underneath the level of objects can then emerge.

But it can also emerge when your attention moves into the present moment and you

realize first that this is all there ever is. And secondly, you realize the insanity of denying, resisting, running away from the present moment, whatever form it takes. Which is what the ego, the egoic self tends to do.

Once you see the insanity of not welcoming the present moment, you're able to say, let's see what happens if I say yes to the form that this moment takes. It changes always. But this moment, the form that it takes, whatever happens right now, the form that it takes right now, am I able to align myself internally with the form that this moment takes because I realize that what is already is.

And it is absurd to argue with the isness of this moment because you cannot change what is. Then you can take action. Once you have aligned yourself with the isness and say, yes, that's how it is.

I'm stuck in the mud here up to my neck. That's what is. Or you can resist that moment.

If you resist that moment, you will react. You will start thrashing out and you will sink deeper into the mud. And if you align yourself with now, suddenly a power comes into your life that comes from the space consciousness that is underneath the conditioned human mind.

Action arises suddenly that is just right to deal with whatever challenge you're facing at this moment. So a power and an intelligence far greater than the reactive human mind comes into your life when you align your life with now, which is the form that this moment takes instead of habitually running away from it, denying it. Then the focal point of your life becomes always this moment.

On the periphery of your life, of course, there is past and future. You know at five o'clock, I have to be at such and such a place. But this is not occupying your consciousness totally.

What is occupying your conscious attention is what you need to face at this moment. And if you're traveling from A to your appointment, five o'clock appointment somewhere else, where are you as you are traveling towards the five o'clock appointment? Where are you between four and five while you travel?

Mentally rehearsing what you're going to say, thinking the problems that might arise at five o'clock when you meet that person, fantasizing about what will happen when you meet them, or being somewhere else, you're missing your life. Now, very often, the form that this moment takes does not look very interesting superficially to the mind. I'm sitting on a plane going somewhere.

I've got another four hours before we arrive. So you're thinking, usually your attention would be absorbed by your life situation. All the problems, things that have happened, that are going to happen, might happen, should have happened but didn't, stories.

You're missing the enormous power that is there concealed underneath the stream of thinking in you. What could it be like if you were in touch with the present moment at that time? You would be sitting there.

Occasionally, you would look out of the window. You could see the shimmering light, the clouds, down below, perhaps mountains, the enormous clarity of the sky. There would be a sense of wonder because there isn't a thought.

I've seen this so many times already. I'm not looking out of the window anymore. I've seen it so many times.

No, you haven't. This is, it's fresh and new. You're denying life by saying, okay, that's an old, I've been on a plane, it's 500 times.

It's nothing new. It's just, look. Can you feel that you are still alive?

Can you feel the enormous aliveness that dwells in your body, in every cell, that's vibrant with life? Feel that as you sit there. See, look, watch the people.

Can you be aware as you sit there, as sense perceptions happen, can you be aware of the now as the inner field of aware presence in which all those beautiful sense perceptions happen? Can you be aware of that field of spacious, vibrantly alive stillness in which you're seeing, hearing, feeling? That's who you are.

Life itself, not some heavy little person with a problematic life situation that exists, yes, on its own little level, but more vitally, who are you underneath that absurd life situation? Everybody's life situation is complicated, but also absurd. In a few years, as I say in the Stillness Speaks, it will be the dash between your date of birth and your date of death on your gravestone.

That will be what's left of your life situation and all the problems. So yes, you give it its due. Of course, you deal with things, the things of this world, but if they absorb your life, they suck the life out of you, the world of objects, the world of things, of mind objects and of physical objects, the world says, this matters, this is absolutely important.

Nothing is absolutely important. It's absolutely important that you know who you are. Then the rest will flow more easily, more powerfully.

So get to, so you're sitting on this plane or you're sitting right here, of course, it's the same. You're sitting right here. Are you sitting here with a heavy little me, identified with every thought that goes through the head?

I don't understand what he's talking about. And I don't want to understand what he's talking about. Don't listen to this.

It could be dangerous. It could be dangerous. Okay, think about your problems, the

things that are really important or that you have to tackle when you get back home.

Yeah, I really, I shouldn't have come here because all the stuff that I haven't, that I left behind or, oh, oh, oh. Do you carry that around as who you are? Or is there something far greater, far deeper?

So do you derive your sense of self from object consciousness or from the vast spaciousness, the vast field of spacious awareness that makes it all possible for even an object, for even a thought to be there? The unconditioned dimension of consciousness that is in you waiting to be discovered. Yourself, ultimately, it is finding something that you've been looking for in the wrong places all your life.

You've been looking for it through more. And you don't need more. You can then play with more, yes, playful, but you don't need more of anything to find yourself.

Some people find themselves in the last 10 seconds of their lives before the accident kills them. Wow, no fear left, nothing left, just an enormous sense of alive peace and serenity. And a few of them survive.

And then they said, I don't know what happened. I could see the accident was coming, but suddenly all fear left me and it became, there was an incredible sense of peace and aliveness. And I knew all is well.

I knew there was nothing to fear anymore suddenly. On that level of your being, fear disappears because fear is to do with identifying with form, the form of me, not realizing that is not, that is who you appear as that form temporarily, yes. But you are life underneath the temporary appearance of a person.

More fundamentally, you are life itself in one of its manifold expressions and a beautiful expression, as beautiful, if not more beautiful, than the incredibly beautiful flowers and whatever else, whatever other form life takes. And the human is an incredible form. It's a form that hasn't flowered yet, but is about to flower because when a human realizes their true nature, who they are underneath the forms they had identified with as themselves, that is awakening, that is freedom, freedom from a personalized limited sense of self.

And then your life on a personal level continues. Your life situation continues, but miraculously something from that dimension flows into also the life of the formal life that you still lead. And because you are connected at that level with the totality of life.

So when you connect with that within yourself, the intelligence of the universe becomes helpful. The one intelligence, the one consciousness that underlies the entire world of manifestation, the billions of forms that, as it's called in the Tao Te Ching, the ancient Chinese book of wisdom, it's called the 10,000 things to describe the world of form. Of course, it's not 10,000 things.

It's not even 10 billion things. It's more than that. That's the world of, and that world of form unfolds much more harmoniously, playfully, and is fulfilling because you're not looking for something in the world of form that it cannot give you.

You're no longer demanding that any situation, any possession, any place, or any person, or any condition should fulfill you or make you happy. Please make me happy. Big house, make me happy.

Holiday, make me happy. Husband, wife, make me happy. Read the Lonely Hearts columns, looking for man or woman to make me happy.

What a dreadful, nobody could live up to that. Nothing in the world of form can live up to that. Because the happiness is already there.

You just haven't a true happiness which is deeper. I would not even perhaps use the word because happiness is usually used for superficial things. Oh, I'm so happy I've got this new thing here.

I'm so happy I found, I'm in love. I'm getting married tomorrow. And so the thing that makes you happy today, the very same thing very often makes you unhappy tomorrow.

Think of your ex-wife or husband. When I do not resist the form that this moment takes, and I welcome it because I realize that I cannot argue with the isness of this moment. It is, it is, what can you do?

There it is. And so I allow this moment to be as it is internally. By doing that, this act of welcoming, of saying yes, of allowing, puts you in touch with the dimension of inner space.

And you sometimes perceive it as if there were suddenly space around the event that before you would have reacted against. You say, well, there it is. The thing is broken down.

That's what is. Okay, we can take action now. But right in the meantime, this is what is.

Before you would have reacted and you said, they should have done something about it. How can they allow this to happen? This shouldn't happen.

I mean, I paid money for this and now it's breaking, it's broken down. I'm going to sue you. Sue them.

They can see that reactivity comes from a place of complaining and the egoic sense of self loves that. It complains about something that is. I'm not saying do something about it.

That's not complaining. The inner complaining about something that is is part of the

resistance to what is. Identify in yourself the complainer.

And that is a very important part of the reactivity of the egoic sense of self. What is it complaining about? The present moment.

What's happening right now shouldn't be happening, but it is. Now, the complaining is so satisfying to the false sense of self because it strengthens it. When you can complain about something, you're saying I'm right and the situation is wrong.

Such, the weather is really miserable today. It's just awful. I'm right, the weather is wrong.

On all levels, any complaining puts you in an imagined position of superiority to the event or to something that's madness, but normal. By the way, normal equals very often, more often than not, mad. Read human history if you doubt it.

So to complain strengthens the false sense of self to allow it. It strengthens so if you complain and react, your own form identity, the me, gets strengthened. The story gets strengthened.

The complaint is incorporated in the story and then you pick up the phone and say, you can't imagine what happened just to me. I'll tell you about it. Oh no, and then you get some feedback.

Oh, you're right, you really should be unhappy about this. So it strengthens the illusion of who you are, but it feels satisfying to the illusion, the illusory me for a moment feels great. I'm really getting into this.

Now, when you allow what is, it doesn't strengthen your form. It puts you in touch with that which has no form in you. It makes you aware of space, inner space.

So here's an event, the thing is broken down and instead of saying, oh, well, there it is. Okay. Suddenly, the same event has a totally different quality to it in your experience.

That means you suddenly experience life completely differently. The same event happens and you say, well, there it is. And suddenly, now I'm speaking metaphorically, it is as if there was suddenly some space around the event.

It no longer occupies your attention totally. There's a spaciousness around the event when you allow it. The allowing is very spacious and that spaciousness is consciousness itself, stillness, inner stillness.

And from there, you can look at a challenging situation in that alert stillness. You're looking and there's a moment of just no thought, simply aware attention, which is your deeper, non-conceptual, unconditioned intelligence comes into action. And you look and then action arises.

Or a thought comes out of that, from where all creativity comes, that level, a thought comes and you suddenly know what you have to do about it. Oh, that's, and you do it. Or an action comes immediately, you do the right thing.

So there's enormous power in facing the present moment, no matter what form it takes, completely and fully, allowing it, facing it, looking, listening, seeing. And there's always more, far more than you need to deal with the situation. The power is there the moment you need it.

But if you project yourself into imaginary problems, how can you deal with that? It can only wear you down. And you get drawn into more and more illusory identity.

So the shift in consciousness happens with a simple act of aligning yourself with what is now, with the present moment. And making that your spiritual practice, the ultimate spiritual practice. And while you're here, see how you are relating to the present moment.

What is your relationship with the present moment? You're denying it, resisting it, or welcoming it. Since it's life itself, you might as well welcome it.

It is more skillful, more intelligent, more wise to welcome what is, and then experience how quickly, if the present moment is challenging, how quickly help comes from within you, but also sometimes from without, as a helpful event, as a sudden thing that happens. How could that suddenly, just the right thing? Because this is the alignment with the totality.

At this deeper level, you are one with one consciousness. You are that. Yes, it's, life can be easy.

That we're not, it doesn't mean challenges will not come anymore. Challenges come. But you can become more alert through every challenge rather than becoming more unconscious through every challenge.

Oh, and you watch. But don't wait for challenges. Use that power that is there every moment, even the beautiful moments.

Here you are in nature. You can see trees, flowers, leaves. Yes, they are dying, but in their deaths, they are beautiful.

Nature, incredible beauty everywhere. Do you truly see it? And when you see it, what happens when you look at a tree and the leaves are dark red or yellow and red?

Are you able to look in complete awareness, complete presence? Be so present that you don't need to interpret what you're seeing. Just look, oh.

Are you able to allow that moment to be as it is without needing to add anything to it?

Just that. Right?

And can you then be aware of the sense perception, which is beautiful, but something that is even more beautiful and deeper? And that's yourself. Who are you?

The awareness, the conscious awareness through which that sense perception happens. And that you cannot grasp. It cannot become an object in your consciousness because it is formless consciousness, not a mind object.

So stillness arises from within more and more as you go through life. And there's enormous power and intelligence in that stillness. It's primordial intelligence.

The human mind is secondary intelligence, very limited, but good for certain things. No good for many other things. For relationships, it's not very good to relate with other humans.

But if you can bring stillness into your relationships, even superficial ones, you can just look. Allow that moment in which that human being appears in front of you to be there fully. Welcome that moment when it takes the form of another human being.

Oh. And there's, again, you're looking, and there's stillness as you look, just looking, alert, attention. Then the compulsive labeling arises less and less in your life.

And if it should still arise, the mind saying something about someone, you recognize it as, yeah, just a thought, not really the truth, because every thought is only one of many possible perspectives about any situation. There's no ultimate truth there, but it's a thought. So you don't have to believe in every thought that comes into your head.

You recognize it as a thought, and it comes and goes, and then the sense of separation between you and the other human being, and also the sense of separation between you and nature that arises because you inhabit a conceptualized reality in the head, labels, judging, interpreting, judging, thinking about, yeah, I wonder what he does, what, I wonder how I can use him. Me. That conceptualized identity, conceptualized reality, and conceptualized identity operate less and less.

That is the shift in consciousness from inhabiting a reality that is made up of thought and concepts to actually touching a deeper reality in yourself. And so when you do that, when the barriers are not there, there's love in the true sense of the word, because whatever you look upon without the conceptual barriers in openness, Jesus said, we must become like little children if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven. What does he mean?

We have to go back to complete ignorance? No, all he means is he just gives you that as an image to see how does a little child look at the world, a one-year-old who hasn't learned concepts yet. Complete openness, you can sense the consciousness that flows

through, is still, and then comes conceptualization.

Dad, what's that called? The first concept and another word on top of that and another word, and then a little later, the human mistakes the concept for the reality. That's a tree.

Oh, now I know what it is. You don't know what it is at all. You only had to put a label to the mystery.

On top of the mystery, you stick a label, tree. It's the depths is already obscure to you of what is there and the aliveness of what's there. And then you do it to yourself.

John Smith from such and such a state, college, family background, religion, a few beliefs, mix them all together in a pot. That's me. Find the stillness that's already there, just waiting.

Perceive the world through that as much as possible. Use this place here where there's nature. It's easier to do it when there's natural things, not man-made.

Walk around in wonder. But when you perceive a tree, you don't regress to the stage of a child. There's a deep knowing.

You have gone beyond concepts. The child hasn't arrived at concepts yet. Very great difference.

You have then transcended the conditioned human mind. Alertness is vital. That's an essential part of that.

The alertness, being awake to the wonder of life, which is outside and even greater wonder inside you. Because inside you, you are consciousness itself. Temporarily as this physical form and psychological form, but underneath it, you are that which is the essence of every life form.

And then you look upon every life form in a sense of recognition. You see that essence of who you are in every form of life. That is called also compassion.

That is also called love. They're ultimately the same thing. Loving care flows then into your interactions and your actions.

You're stepping out of thousands of years of collective human conditioning, a dreadful burden. The good news is we do not need thousands of years to step out of it. Cause and Miracle says, it has taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time at all to be who you are.

Thank you.